

My name is Susan Borgman. I am a business person, lifelong Michigan resident and current resident of the City of Wyoming.

As the daughter of, and now that my Dad has retired, sister to a major Michigan car dealer employing over 100 additional Michigan residents who depend on cars for their and their families livelihoods I have a strong appreciation for the need for quality roads and the economic impact that manufacturing and selling automobiles and trucks has on Michigan and people who live in this great state.

After attaining my Michigan driver's license in 1970 I owned and drove cars or vans for close to thirty years. Then in 1999, due to disability I lost the ability to drive.

Losing ability to drive and transport independently showed me another side of Michigan's transportation system and it is a very dark side indeed. Within a few short weeks of no longer being able to simply get into a car or come and go as I pleased I learned that from a practical standpoint Michigan has only *one* truly functional, life enabling transportation system. I learned also that *that* system is built on the assumption that everyone drives or has access to a vehicle and someone who does. In addition I learned, and very painfully I might add, that not being able to drive in this country, this state and our communities is extremely disabling.

I am here today to say that I have read the MDOT five year transportation plan and am extremely disappointed in the lack of resources Michigan proposes to dedicate to forms of transportation *other* than roads designed around and almost exclusively for individual private cars and trucks. While I will concede that buses use roads too what I'd like to see is recognition on the part of Michigan's leadership that access to transportation choice and alternative transportation is vital to Michigan, its economy and Michigan citizens.

Transportation means jobs, not just to construction crews building roads but to people who need to get any kind of jobs and retain them.

Access to transportation means people can work, have choices where to live. It means they can take care of their kids and themselves. It means freedom to participate in schools, shop at stores offering prices they can afford, going to church, being able to enjoy Michigan's natural and other resources like other Michigan residents can and being able to take an active part in communities their tax dollars support. It also means being able to relate one on one or in groups with family and friends.

In six years of not being able to drive and relying on Michigan's existing public transportation systems I learned that transportation equals access to life and lack of transportation translates to little or no "life" or freedom at all.

In Grand Rapids we're lucky. We have "pretty good", though geographically limited public transit, in large part because enough people recognize public transit is important and are willing to dedicate property tax dollars to support it. But, in my opinion as a Michigan citizen, "pretty good" isn't good enough. Michigan and MDOT need to make development and establishment of better and more extensive transportation that is accessible to and dependable for all Michigan citizens a priority. What's more Michigan transit providers and residents depending on alternative transit in order to access their communities and lives shouldn't have to fight to keep every penny of funding currently earmarked for buses and public transit.

As of six days ago, thanks to an exorbitantly expensive electronic custom adapted van that only I can drive I am once again able to transport myself independently. This means I now own a van that I can drive some places, some of the time. Although I still need and use public transportation I feel a little guilty because so many other Michigan residents, including many friends and people who simply can't afford a car live unnecessarily limited lives and have no transportation choice at all. *Please* do not forget that *everyone* in Michigan does not own a car or drive.